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STATE OF MICHIGAN

THE CIRCUIT COURT
17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

GEORGE S. BUTH
CIRCUIT JUDGE

EX 3

HALL OF JUSTICE
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49503

IN RE: 17TH CIRCUIT COURT FAMILY DIVISION'S ADMINISTRATIVE
CASE ASSIGNMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE DIRECTIVE
DATED FEBRUARY 28, 2001

On May 1, 2000, the Circuit Court moved into its final stage of the Family Division Plan. This move triggered a more proportionate assignment of case types to all the Judges assigned in the Family Division. The exception being that the Circuit Judge rotating into the Family Division was not assigned child protective or randomly assigned divorces, involving minor children, case types. From May 1st until now, it has become apparent that the amount of time and effort in determining the existence of any prior judicial contact with the family members has evolved into a complex and time-consuming endeavor. This process at times results in staff uncertainty with the judicial assignment due to the many possible and, at times, conflicting case scenarios. After careful study by the Court's Administrative staff, their recommendations as put forth in this Administrative Directive details a new Judicial Case Assignment Policy and Procedure to be followed by the Family Division of the 17th Circuit Court. The continuation of this directive is subject to acceptance of a *Local Administrative Order* being submitted to the Michigan Supreme Court.

The emphasis of this new Judicial Case Assignment Policy and Procedure is to assign to the three Probate Judges and the Circuit Judge, permanently assigned to the Family Division, caseloads that involve both frequent and prolonged judicial contact with the family. Such cases foster the spirit of the "one family/one judge" rule and are characteristic of divorces involving minor children, adoptions and child protective cases. All other domestic relations case types are assigned to the Circuit Judge rotating into the Family Division. Such cases are characteristic of paternity, support and other domestic matters that do not have as much judicial contact with the families as does the former. Support, paternity and other domestic matters usually result in defaults or consent entries of judgment and are many times heard by the Circuit Court Referees.

Therefore, it is directed that the Kent County Clerk's Office/Courts Division use the following table to determine Judicial Case Assignment within the Family Division of Circuit Court.

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Judicial Directive


17TH CIRCUIT COURT FAMILY DIVISION JUDICIAL CASE ASSIGNMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE FEBRUARY, 2001			
Judges Carpenter, Feeney, Gardner & Hillary		Judge Sullivan	
Case Type Filing	Action Taken	Case Type Filing	Action Taken
New DM	Check for prior DM, NA, DL or current PP or PJ actions and assign to one of the above Judges or, if none, randomly assign to one of the above	New DO All DO motions	Assigned all new DO cases All DO motions including post-judgment motions will be heard by Judge Sullivan
New PPO	Check for prior DM, NA, DL or current PP or PJ actions and assign to one of the above Judges or, if none, randomly assign to one of the above	New PPO	Judge Sullivan will not be assigned any PPO(s) nor will he hear PPO motions
New Delinquency	Check for prior DM, NA, DL or current PP or PJ actions and assign to one of the above Judges or, if none, randomly assign to Judges Carpenter, Feeney, Gardner, Hillary or Sullivan	New Delinquency	Check for prior DM, NA, DL or current PP or PJ actions and assign to one of the above Judges or, if none, randomly assign to Judges Carpenter, Feeney, Gardner, Hillary or Sullivan
New Child Protective	Check for prior DM, NA, DL or current PP or PJ actions and assign to one of the above Judges or, if none, randomly assign to one of the above	New Child Protective	Judge Sullivan will not be assigned any Child Protective cases
All PPO(s) will be assigned only to Judges Carpenter, Feeney, Gardner or Hillary		All domestic relations cases (except for case types DM, NA, DL, PP, PH, PJ) will be assigned to Judge Sullivan, and Judge Sullivan will hear all motions for domestic relations cases (except case types for DM, NA, DL, PP, PH, PJ)	

Any prior judicial involvement by Judge Steketee results in a random Judge assignment	
Any prior judicial involvement by Judge Buth results in a random Judge assignment	

Furthermore, the Court directs the Kent County Clerk's Office/Courts Division to perform the following reassignment of cases:

- all pending domestic relations case types except divorces involving minor children to Judge Paul J. Sullivan
- all pending divorces involving minor children previously assigned to Judge Buth be randomly reassigned to Judges Carpenter, Feeney, Gardner and Hillary
- all pending divorces involving minor children currently assigned to Judge Sullivan be randomly reassigned to Judges Carpenter, Feeney, Gardner and Hillary

Date: February 28, 2001


George S. Buth, Chief Circuit Judge